

Reid's Dairy  
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## Long-time Reid's Dairy employee becomes retail store supervisor

By Henry Bury

The Intelligencer

Steve Dawkins smiles every time he sees someone buying or eating Reid's Dairy ice cream.

For the past eight years, he's been the person responsible for producing its ice cream. In fact, he ran the ice cream production department ever since it opened at Reid's in 1986.

Dawkins has taken that job seriously, learning all about the trade by taking various courses, including a week-long program at the ice cream school at University of Guelph. He's also succeeded in getting his milk and cream grader's licence from Kemptville Agricultural College and several safety course certificates.

He knew that training and "hard work" would pay off when he joined Reid's Dairy 20 years ago.

"Long hours don't mean much to me because I believe if you work hard, you'll go somewhere," he said.

It's paid off for Dawkins, as he's been named the supervisor for the dairy's retail store.

"It'll be a challenge, just like taking over the ice cream department years ago. It's like starting all over again in a new career and it's something I'm looking forward to...I want to retire at Reid's Dairy," he said.

Dawkins has literally worked through the ranks to get where he is today.

He joined Reid's at the age of 18, making milk deliveries and working the creamer machine. Then he joined the "wash-up sanitation" crew and helped mix vats of apple and orange juice, later on to the milk bagger machine and the milk carton machine. His first big promotion was as the ice cream department supervisor in 1986.

He's equally as excited about moving from behind the production lines and into the retail outlet as supervisor.

"I like dealing with the public and this will be the ideal job. It's a whole new challenge going into the marketing end of things," said Dawkins.

David Quickert said it's employees like Dawkins who've built the family-owned dairy into what it is today — the largest of a handful of independently-owned and operated dairies in Ontario.

Reid's Dairy, in fact, does three per cent of Ontario's fluid milk production.

Quickert, the vice-president of marketing and sales said that's quite an accomplishment.

"Our dairy is similar to a big operation. We have the same equipment but we're small enough that we're on top of any problems that could arise. We have that small touch and that's definitely an advantage of ours," said the 26-year-old Quickert.

Reid's Dairy was founded in Belleville in 1910.

Quickert's father, Armin, and grandfather, Arthur, purchased Reid's Dairy in 1967, while it was still on Parker Street. In 1985, they moved the operation to the current Bell Boulevard site and have subsequently completed two additions, including the attention-drawing castle and tower.

The dairy's 45 production and management staff process fluid milk, cream, ice cream and pure apple and orange juice from concentrates.

"A lot of people still may not know what we do here," said Quickert, who's brother, Stephen, is vice-president of operations.

Most of its milk is purchased from local farmers.

In the late 1970s, Reid's Dairy branched out to include its Milky Way retail outlets. There are 22 such stores from Kingston to Mississauga, including the flagship store on Bell Boulevard.

Each retail store sells strictly Reid's products as well as cheese produced by its sister company, Riverside Cheese, in Trenton.

For the Quickerts, Reid's Dairy is more than a business. It's something they want the community to enjoy.

Consequently, they've built a 100-foot high castle and tower for visitors to enjoy and draw attention to their dairy.

"My father, Armin, is intrigued by castles...we wanted to stand out and have a little bit of fun with the milk product," he said.

As well, the Quickerts began the "Double R Ranch" and, every summer, visitors can see goats, ducks and geese.

"We wanted to have some fun with the plant, create some fun and excitement for the people in the community. I think we've done that," said Quickert.

### Dairy diary

— Reid's Dairy was founded in 1910 in Belleville.

— Armin Quickert and his father, Arthur, purchased the dairy operation in 1967 when it was situated on Parker Street.

— In 1985, the Quickerts moved the dairy operation to its current Bell Boulevard site. They own 25 acres of property; the plant alone is 3,500 square feet.

— Reid's Dairy produces fluid milk, cream, ice cream and pure orange and apple juices.

— It's the largest independently-owned and operated dairy of the few that are operating in Ontario. Reid's accounts for three per cent of Ontario's fluid milk production.

— The dairy employs 45 full and part-time staff in its production plant.

— Reid's also operates 22 retail stores from Mississauga to Kingston, including the flagship outlet at its Bell Boulevard location.